Surveillance Impact Report

Covert Audio/Visual Recording Devices (Record Only)
San Diego Police Department

DESCRIPTION

Covert audio-visual recording devices (record only) are concealed pieces of equipment capable of recording video and audio data occurring within range of the microphone. The video and audio recordings are stored on the system. The device is housed in such a way that the identity of the device is not immediately recognizable or is hidden or otherwise concealed. The devices capture valuable evidence by creating contemporaneous and objective audio records during undercover law enforcement operations. The audio can be transferred to a computer at the end of its deployment. The recording devices currently being used by SDPD are manufactured by Oculus.

PURPOSE

The device captures valuable evidence by creating contemporaneous and objective audio records during an undercover law enforcement operation. The device can corroborate witness statements and help identify key individuals involved.

LOCATION

These devices can be used citywide to assist in an investigation.

IMPACT

These video and audio recorders are placed in public spaces or with the investigator where there is no expectation of privacy. No warrant is needed to use this technology. These devices promote transparency and accountability in law enforcement while assisting in the arrest and prosecution of suspects.

MITIGATIONS

When these audio/visual devices are deployed, any contact with the public will be in a public place. In public spaces there is no expectation of privacy. Generally, most encounters where these devices would be efficient would be away from the public.

DATA TYPES AND SOURCES

The videos are recorded in an Mp4 format. These files can be played on most computers.

DATA SECURITY

These devices are record only. These recordings can only be played by the investigator and the administrator.

FISCAL COST

System A - $6,197.00

System B - $14,276.00

Upgrade lens $726.00

Accessory kit $157.00

THIRD PARTY DEPENDENCE

A third party is not required or used for this item.

ALTERNATIVES

There are few companies that use this type of technology. These systems fit a specific need to our investigators. These systems were chosen because of the needs and requests of the investigators.

TRACK RECORD

The systems have been used on several occasions. Because of the covert status of these incidents no further details can be given.

PUBLIC ENGAGEMENT AND COMMENTS

On March 7, 2024, at 1805 hours, there was a publicly held meeting in all nine council districts in the City of San Diego. The following surveillance technologies were presented by the San Diego Police Department:

1. Covert Audio Recording Device
2. Covert Audio Recording Device (Record Only)
3. Covert Audiovisual Record Device
4. Motion Activated Trail Cameras
5. Pan Tilt Zoom Video Camera Mobile Unit
6. Pan Tilt Zoom Video Camera Mobile Unit with Cloud Based Storage
7. Power Over Ethernet Pan Tilt Zoom Video Cameras
8. Power Over Ethernet Digital Video Recorders
9. Power Over Ethernet Network Video Recorders
10. Power Over Ethernet Video Cameras

There were two attendees in District 1. There were no attendees in District 2. There were no attendees in District 3. There were no attendees in District 4. There were no attendees in District 5. There were no attendees in District 6. There were no attendees in District 7. There was one attendee

in District 8. There were no attendees in District 9. There were no questions or comments from the three attendees. There was one question submitted to the online public comment form.

Question #1:

> Are motion-activated trail cameras going to be used on trails or is that just the name of the type of camera? Will there be signs notifying the public of their location?

Answer #1:

> "Trail Camera" is a generic term for battery-powered motion-activated cameras, which are not exclusively used on trails.
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> The San Diego Police Department utilizes battery-powered motion-activated "trail" cameras. These cameras are used when normal power sources for other equipment are unavailable. The device is used in areas where there are repeat offenses and/or more evidence needs to be collected for a successful apprehension. The device may be installed overtly or housed in such a way that the identity of the device is not immediately recognizable or is hidden or otherwise concealed. The placement of all recording devices shall be done in accordance with all Federal and State laws and shall adhere to all established case law. Absent a court order, a search warrant, an undercover operation, or permission of the property owner, motion-activated cameras may only be used to monitor public places or places visible to the public where persons do not have a reasonable expectation of privacy.

To maximize the reach of the materials presented at the community meetings, the Police Department created a link to the City of San Diego's technology website, which provides all materials for presented technologies as well as upcoming technologies and additional materials. The materials and questions/comments section can be accessed by visiting the web address below: www.sandiego.gov/police/technology. The web address was posted in conjunction with the QR code at the community meeting.

The Department also video-recorded a meeting so that it could be presented to a larger group. The benefit of the video was the capability of translating the presentation into over 100 languages, such as Spanish and other languages frequently used by the communities within San Diego, to maximize penetration of the materials to affected groups. The link to the video is at the San Diego Police Department's YouTube channel under Surveillance Technology Community Meeting 03/07/2024 - YouTube